

For THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

WATCHING.

Soft through the trees summer breezes are sighing,
Sweet breathe the perfumes from meadows fresh
shorn.
Far in the west sunset colors are dying:—
'Neath a green shade sits a maiden forlorn.
Stealthily over her twilight is creeping,
Robbing her hair of its bright golden hue.
Drawn by the darkness the star-eyes come peeping
Silly through rents in their canopy blue.

Burdened with fears, she yet lingers, in sorrow,
Watching her dear one's return, all in vain.
Vainly she hopes he may come on the morrow;
'Ne'er shall she greet him, though long she remain.

Yonder he lies, where the wild tide of battle
Fiercest rolled over the death-heavy sod,—
Lies where he fell 'mid the musketry's rattle,
Proned on the earth at the beck of his God.

On his dead face the calm starlight is beaming—
'O'er his still form breathe the winds soft and low;
While in the distance the camp-fires are gleaming,
Tinting his cheeks with a bright, ruddy glow.

Thus sits the maiden, her sad vigil keeping,
Watching for one who shall come never more;
Thus lies her hero, so peacefully sleeping
After life's feverish visions are o'er.

CAPTURE OF FORT HARRISON

HOW THE REBELS FAILED TO RETAKE IT.

By Brevet Brigadier-General Cecil Clay in Philadelphia Times.

Some time ago there was published in *The Weekly Times* an account of the attempt which General Lee made at the suggestion of General Gordon, who was entrusted with its execution, to break through the lines of our army before Petersburg at a point not far from Appomattox river, so as to effect a lodgment between the bulk of General Grant's forces and City Point, and roll the army up from its right flank. As a tactical movement this was not a bad one, but at the time General Gordon attempted to put it in execution it was too late for any permanent result to come from it. Fort Steadman was taken by a night attack and held for a few hours, but the enemy were soon driven from it and our lines re-established as before.

The idea of this movement, however, was not a new one. It had suggested itself to some one as early as June, 1864, and came within an ace of being put to severe practical test. On the 24th day of that month the right of General Grant's lines before Petersburg resting on the Appomattox river, was held by the First division of the Eighteenth Corps. This division contained three brigades, each of which in turn occupied the front line of works for twenty-four hours at a time. On the day mentioned the front line was held by the Third brigade, composed of the Fortieth Massachusetts, Twenty-first Connecticut, Ninety-second New York, One Hundred and Eighty-eighth Pennsylvania, and Fifty-eighth Pennsylvania. I was serving in the latter regiment as a captain; the division was commanded by General George J. Stannard, of Vermont, and the brigade by Brevet Brigadier-General Guy V. Henry, an officer of the Regulars, who was Colonel of the Fortieth Massachusetts. There was no lack of "fight" about either of these commanders. This front line of work consisted of a strong rifle-pit, made by digging a deep and moderately wide ditch, the earth from which was thrown out upon the side next the enemy and made into a parapet. Inside the ditch on the same side was a wide banquet of proper height for the men to stand upon and fire over the parapet; while in the rear face were dug at intervals recesses in which the officers accommodated themselves, spreading over the top shelter tents to keep off the sun or rain. A short distance in front of this line was a string of skirmish pits or French pits, that is to say, a lot of small detached pits; a few yards apart, dug for the accommodation of the skirmish line and made so as to be commanded by the fire of the works in the rear. They were dug about ten feet square by running an inclined plane from the surface of the ground at the rear to the depth of some three feet in front, and throwing up the earth as a breastwork. In each of these pits were three or four men. The enemy's front line was in fair rifle range, and the intervening space was covered with a growing crop of oats, high enough to afford considerable cover.

The night of the 23d passed in quietness, but on the morning of the 24th, just as we were beginning to think about breakfast, we were suddenly roused from our meditations by a great roar of artillery and the horrid shrieking and whistling of missiles of all sorts, which flew just over our heads, plunged into the bank behind us, smashed the top of our parapet, knocked down our shelter tents and scattered dirt and dust by the tubful all over us, but, very fortunately, little death and not much destruction. When we recovered from our momentary astonishment we found the enemy had concentrated the fire of forty guns upon the small front held by our brigade. Any one who has "been there" knows what that means. Forty guns concentrated on the front of one brigade! Why the air was perfectly blue. There was a continuous roar, shriek, and whiz; fragments of shell flew in every direction. Crash, bang! and a big feller knocks down as much earth as an Irishman would throw out of a cellar in a day. The second and third lines of works were on higher ground than the front line, but behind them the ground sloped off again to a ravine, running down toward the river, and in this ravine were collected the cooks of the various regiments and all the cooking of the division was done there. Just as the firing began it happened that two Connecticut men were marching along toward brigade headquarters, carrying between them a large market basket containing the breakfast for General Henry and his staff mess. A shell hit the basket and away went beefsteak, bread and bacon in every direction. There was no breakfast at brigade headquarters that morning. All the shots that went over the rise of the ground behind us pitched into the cooks' ravine, and there was soon a frantic exodus of detailed men and darkies looking out for a safe place. Anticipating a heavy assault as the sequence to this artillery fire the teams were loaded and dispatched

to the rear, so that there was no chance to get any fresh rations, and General Henry had to wait until dinner-time for his breakfast. I fared better than most of them. After the affair was all over I saw my faithful African, old "Prince," coming along the pit from the covered way, covered with dust and dirt, but bearing in triumph a well-filled basket and an odoriferous coffee-pot.

"Why, Prince," I exclaimed, "why in the world didn't you bring my breakfast up here? What have you been doing all this while? Breakfast should have been ready an hour ago."

"Of course, sir," poor Prince replied, with wide expanded eyes, "I knowed you would want your breakfast. You're 'bliged to have your breakfast, but you have no idea how dey was a chunkin down yonder. Everybody had done left and gone away 'cept me and another man."

After continuing half an hour or so the fire stopped as suddenly as it began. We were expecting a charge and the men at once sprang to their feet and began peering over the parapet, while all along the line was heard the click, click, click!—click!—click! of musket locks. The rebel skirmish line came tumbling out over their works and disappearing in the oats, advanced rapidly to our skirmish pits. The men who occupied these offered little resistance and allowed the enemy to enter them, but once in they turned on them and said: "Come in, Johnny!" The call was reiterated by the men on the works and in a few minutes we had disposed of the whole of the skirmish line, some four hundred or five hundred men of Hagood's South Carolina brigade; we could count but thirty-six who got back over the enemy's works. This was the end of that affair—no other troops followed the skirmishers and in a little while things had settled down to their normal condition.

It seems that General Lee imagined that, to aid General Grant in his reaching out to our left, we must have weakened the right of our line and that he might possibly be able to break through next the river and double us up. He had all his available troops massed opposite us that morning. Hagood's brigade was to advance as skirmishers and Hoke's division was to follow. Hoke, however, made a mess of it in some way, did not start in time and the thing fell through. Hoke was an obstinate man. At any rate his division did not charge that day. We had developed too much force; we had three lines of works all well manned. I think Hoke's division had not been remodeled within a month before, when it consisted of four brigades, containing, according to the names of their commanders, the following regiments respectively: Hagood's, the Seventh, Eleventh, Twenty-first, Twenty-fifth, and Twenty-seventh South Carolina; Colquitt's, the Sixth, Nineteenth, Twenty-third, Twenty-seventh, and Twenty-eighth Georgia; Clingman's, the Eighth, Thirty-first, Fifty-first, and Sixty-first North Carolina, and Martin's, the Seventeenth, Forty-second and Sixty-sixth North Carolina. What other troops were to aid Hoke I do not know, but for such a movement there should have been more, and as General Lee was there he probably had others, as many as he could spare from his right.

In December, 1863, the Fifty-eighth Pennsylvania regiment was in North Carolina. General Butler issued an order under the terms of which, should the regiment re-enlist three-fourths of its men by January 1, 1864, it should be granted a furlough of thirty days within thirty days from that date and go home as a veteran regiment. The men accordingly re-enlisted, but on one pretext and another had been refused their furlough; had been through the spring campaign from North Carolina to Bermuda Hundred; then through the Cold Harbor slaughter and from that to Petersburg, and now were beginning to feel dissatisfied. The chance of a whack at the enemy cheered them up on the morning of the 24th of June—it was seldom we got a fair chance at them, we standing on the defensive—and they were quite disappointed because Hoke did not come out. That day we received our six months overdue furlough and the disappointment was forgotten. Three months from that we did receive a visit from Hoke's division and were able to give it a warm reception.

On the 29th of September, 1864, the First division, Eighteenth Corps, stormed Fort Harrison. I do not propose now to give an account of this affair, although I have never seen any account of it in print except a personal narrative published by me in the *Germantown Telegraph* in 1876. It is necessary to say something about it, however, so as to explain what follows. Fort Harrison was a strong earthwork with an eighteen feet parapet and deep ditch. Its shape was three sides of a square, the fourth side open so as to be commanded by the next line in rear. It mounted eleven guns *en barbette*. In the next line, and somewhat to the (our) right of Fort Harrison, was Fort Gilmer, a work equally strong. Both these forts were known to us as at Chapin's Farm, a few miles below Richmond on the north side of the James. Among the papers published by the Southern Historical Society is an article upon the attack on Fort Gilmer, in which the writer says he believes there was an earthwork somewhat nearer the river called Battery Harrison, and thinks it mounted several guns. "Of this the Federals took possession," and he then goes on to describe the attack on Fort Gilmer, because that failed, and so left him some cause for self gratulation. We crossed the James on the night of the 28th of September and attacked the enemy on the morning of the 29th. The First division, Eighteenth Corps, assailed Fort Harrison, while the attack on Fort Gilmer was entrusted to General Birney and was a failure. Our division marched three-quarters of a mile through open ground, straight up to Fort Harrison and into it. That the "taking possession" was not such a simple affair, may be understood when I say that in the Fifty-eighth Pennsylvania, which I commanded in the attack—the guiding regiment of the division—there was one hundred and ten men killed and wounded out of a total of two hundred and twenty-six present. The first three men on the parapet were Private Copeland, of Company F, who was shot through the head and killed; Lieutenant Johnson, who was shot through both arms, but was, nevertheless, the first man in and got another shot in the breast; and I, who carried in the first color on the work, the blue State flag of the One Hundred and Eighty-eighth Pennsyl-

vania, whose color-bearer had been killed and got three shots in me also. General Ord, who commanded the Corps, was wounded in the leg, and of our three brigade commanders one was killed, one wounded, and the third, Colonel S. H. Roberts, of the One Hundred and Thirty-ninth New York, commanding our brigade, compelled to return to the sick bed from which he had risen to take a gallant part in the fray. The sort of "taking possession" some times becomes annoying. However, there is no denying that we did take possession, and it was no less a feat as that Hoke's division was sent to do it.

There was a good deal of excitement at Richmond the day we took Fort Harrison. Grant was hammering away mercilessly on the extreme left beyond Petersburg, and Lee had all or more than he could do to resist him, and had left the lines north of the James not very strongly defended as to numbers. When, therefore, it was known that we had crossed the river and had already captured Fort Harrison, there was great consternation in the capital. No one knew how soon we might make our appearance at the gates of the city. Home guards and all others who by courtesy could be called soldiers were ordered out and sent forth to the lines, and word was sent to General Lee of the capture of the position. There was, in truth, cause for alarm. Had Birney massed a division and captured Fort Gilmer, that, too, would have been a bad business, and then any sort of cooperation between his forces and ours would have done much to variegated troops back upon the river. Had Birney had his own ideas on the subject, he began by sending one colored regiment to attack Fort Gilmer. When that was answered by Lee's two, and then a white regiment, and, of course, remained with the colored and there was no going ahead on the part of the line. Our division, after taking Fort Harrison, moved toward the river and captured several other minor works, but the command was held; General Ord was wounded, all our brigade commanders were *hors du combat*, and the command of the division devolved upon the regimental colonel of a New York regiment, of whom nothing was to be expected in any capacity. We advanced no further, therefore, but set to work to establish ourselves in the position we had so as to be able to hold them.

General Ord having been wounded, General Weitzel took command of the Eighteenth Corps. Arriving at Fortress Monroe while the fighting was in progress, he was ordered by General Lee to take the fastest boat he could find and go at once to the front. This he did, and reached Chapin's Farm after the fighting of the 29th was over, but in time to prepare for the next day. The capture of Fort Harrison and the defeat of such a large body of troops as Lee had in Richmond was felt by the enemy to be a severe blow. Lee determined to attempt the recapture of the fort by assault. On the morning of the 30th of September Hoke's division was brought over from Petersburg and Lee himself directed the attack. Meantime our men had not been idle. During the night succeeding the fight everybody worked with such tools or appliances as they could be had and a sort of rifle-pit was excavated across the rear or open face of Fort Harrison. In this the men lay three or four deep, and their rifles were scattered along the rear of the pit so that there should be no lack of ammunition. When the enemy advanced in column and had to charge over a slightly descending ground to reach the fort. The division came on in the order of regiments with their swords drawn, arms put up and battle-flags flying. As soon as it came within range our men began firing and, as they were in the pits, with the help of the rifling of the pieces and handing them to the front, kept up a tremendous fire which did much nothing could stand, let alone advance. When the fire opened the men were all shooting low, "an amiable weakness," and a long line of pits of dust plainly to be seen, throwing up some distance on the higher side of the advance column marked the impact of the bullets. Toward the head of the oncoming mass reached the line of fire and then—! It seemed as if a wall of fire in cold blood, that men would be scattered in the slaughter of their fellows, but the necessities of the war as carried on in this manner, on our part, had almost invariably made the attacking party; now we were on the defensive and had a chance to retaliate, and we did it effectively. Away went our organization, our men, officers, and battle-flags, and the whole stood that withering fire. Officers starting to the front, flags waved and the crowd, for such it soon became, struggled to get up to our works, but there was no standing the while, and the whole mass fell back in confusion. A second charge met the same fate, but animated by the presence of General Lee, the division made still another attempt, but only to break in the rear again, thoroughly used up. Several hundred prisoners were taken and a number of battle-flags, while the ground was covered with the killed and wounded. We had made a great slaughter, and Fort Harrison was still ours, not to be again endangered. The loss on our side was small and easily attributable to the fire of the moderate gunboats in the river. General Sumner, our division commander, lost an arm, and there were, perhaps, a hundred other casualties. The Confederate loss was probably ten times that.

While a wagon filled with cartridges was being unloaded just in the rear of our men the six muskets attached to it were all killed or wounded and one man lost his leg. The rest of the wounded mules were horrible. During the next charge there was one poor confederate, separated from the leg, who used his musket as a walking stick, with its aid went limping to the rear. A number of shots were fired at him, while many of the men cheered him on, anxious to see him get safely away. Looking around occasionally to see that no one was after him, he finally disappeared without further mishap. It was about noon when the first charge was made, and while the fighting was in progress rain began to fall and continued to pour down all night, making the situation of the men in the trenches miserable enough, and that of the poor wounded men detestable. Our men, however, could afford to laugh at their discomforts. Hoke's division had visited us and found us at home.

"DIXIE."

Dan Emmett, the minstrel, says that he wrote the song "Dixie" as a "walkaround" for Bryant's company in New York in 1859. On Saturday night Bryant asked him to make something that could be used after one rehearsal, as it must go on Monday night, and during Sunday he wrote the song. The catch words, "I wish I was in Dixie," were taken from an expression common among circus men when cold weather caught them in the North, the word "Dixie" being applied to the South in rather a confused allusion to Mason and Dixon's line. The song became popular almost in an instant, and Emmett sold the right to use it to other companies and finally disposed of the copyright, but his total receipts from it were less than \$800. At the breaking out of the war the South appropriated the air, and for a time it was not heard at the North, but Emmett says that after Lee's surrender Lincoln asked a band to play it at Washington, saying, "If we have captured the rebel commander we have captured the rebel tune as well." It was not for some time after this, however, that it became popular again.

HOME FOR DISABLED VETERANS.

Thanks to the undying energy of General W. S. Rosecrans and his colleagues, the worn-out veterans of the late war, of whom alone ninety-one are known to be scattered in almshouses in California, the gallant old soldiers are now in a fair way to have a home. The most glorious local monument to our murdered President would undoubtedly be the founding of a home for his veteran and disabled comrades of the war of the Union. We understand that the net proceeds of the street railways and ferries for Thanksgiving Day are to be given to this excellent purpose. If Garfield were alive now, and could dictate his wishes, there is no question but that he would scorn the greatest bronze or marble monument ever erected compared to the perpetuation of his name and fame in connection with a home for our soldiers.—*San Francisco News Letter*

ONE OF EARTH'S NOBLEMEN.

When the Cyprian was wrecked on the coast of Wales a few weeks ago, the two hundred people who stood horror-stricken along the shore saw an act of heroism rarely witnessed under any circumstances. The captain, John A. Strachan, of Liverpool, had told those on board that everyone must look to himself. Most of the crew had dropped overboard, and Captain Strachan also prepared to leap into the billows. He tied a life-belt about his waist and mounted the rail. At that moment he noticed the pale face of a boy peering from below decks. The lad was a stow-away. A few hours ago he was a sneak, an unworthy thing, a miserable pilferer of privileges; but now the skipper only remembered he was a human being, to be saved if possible, at any rate not to be left behind. Without a word Captain Strachan unbuckled the life-belt from his waist and lashed it ship-shape upon the little stow-away, bidding him save himself. "I can swim," said the captain, "take the belt." Over the side went the stow-away, lifted upon the surf like a cork; over the side went the captain, trusting, like the good brave fellow that he was, to his strength, enfeebled with long watching and anxiety. But swimming was impossible in such a sea. The boatswain, struggling for his own life, caught at the captain, who was still making headway, and both went down, never to be seen again; while the little stow-away, with the good captain's life-belt about his waist, was flung upon the Welsh coast, battered about, but alive to tell the story of his strange fate and his kind friend's heroism.

A DARING FEAT.

A daring feat in navigation was performed recently by Captain James Hart, a Yankee skipper, now in the employ of the Chilean government. More than a year ago the iron screw steamer *Rimac* was wrecked by the Peruvians. The burned and sunken hulk was left in the harbor at Callao. Last month Captain Hart raised the hulk, repaired the engines and steamed southward to Valparaiso, a distance of 1,558 miles. Every particle of woodwork had been burned from the *Rimac* and her ribs shone like those of a megatherium's skeleton. The deck beams were cracked and twisted as if they had been thin iron wires. Very heavy weather was encountered, and as the vessel would dip into the seas or they would strike her abeam the water would rush into the hold, threatening to swamp her at any moment. All hands, from captain to cook, were wet through the entire trip. Several of the damaged deck beams broke through the straining of the sides and one day the remains of the bridge tumbled into the hold, carrying with it the binnacle and the wheel which had been temporarily fixed up.

STONEWALL JACKSON FRIGHTENED.

Governor Jackson, of West Virginia, relates the following anecdote:

I recollect asking "Stonewall," who was my cousin, if he had ever been frightened in war. He said yes, once he had been considerably under a sense of fear. It was in the City of Mexico. A chest containing a large sum of money had been put in Lieutenant Jackson's charge, and to be perfectly secure of it he ordered it carried to his headquarters, in an old abbey or convent, and laid down there alone in the room with it to sleep, a sentinel walking the corridor outside. He had been there in bed only a few minutes, and was getting drowsy, when he distinctly heard something under his bed, which lifted up as if a man was secreted there. Jackson said he leaped out of bed and drew his sword and examined the bed and the room in vain. Jackson then supposed he had been possibly dreaming and resumed his bed. Just as he was thinking it was all a mistake his bed lifted again, plainly, and with some force. He started forth a second time, sword in hand, and behold! nothing was there. "This time," said he, "I was scared, indeed, till my attention was called to a shouting outside in the street, and then I found that it was an earthquake passing under the City of Mexico that had lifted my bed up and given me such apprehensions."

A tunnel has been cut through an extinct volcano in New Zealand. It is three thousand yards in length.

CLEANING OUT THE SUTLER.

The army sutler was the soldier's best friend and worst enemy. He was looked upon as an extortioner, and therefore an enemy, and yet he was regarded as a friend who stood between the soldier and hunger. There were occasions when regimental wagons could not "get there," but it was only on rare occasions that the sutler's wagons could not pull through. It is true he asked a big price for his cake, cheese, and canned goods, but he had taken big risks in following the regiment. All things considered, the sutler did not deserve the reproach bestowed upon his calling. He ran risks which only brave men take, and his expenses sometimes devoured his profits, large as they seemed. Very few of them made any great amount of money, and scores of them were financially "busted" by raids and robberies.

From first to last the sutler was considered fair game for any one who could beat him, and when he could not be tricked he could be cleaned out. This latter process was the darkest mystery in army life. No one seemed to plan or to lead, and yet all seemed to understand. At a given moment, from twenty-five to one hundred men would suddenly appear at the sutler's tent, or hut, and go through him like a hurricane. The blow fell so quickly that there was no dodging it, and the guards arrived too late to make an arrest or save anything.

At the remount camp at Pleasant Valley, in 1865, thirty men fell upon the sutler's cabin about five minutes after roll-call. It was a stout log hut, securely barred and bolted, and contained \$700 dollars worth of stores. The clerk, a young man of nineteen, slept within, armed with two revolvers. There was a grand yell, a crash, and all was over. In five minutes from the first alarm a guard was on the spot, but too late. The only articles left in the hut would not have sold for \$50. The clerk was outside in his night-clothes, robbed of his arms and cash, and cheeses, bags of nuts, boxes of candy, and cases of tobacco and canned goods had disappeared as if taken up by the wind. A strict search of camp was at once begun, but not so much as a nickel's worth of the stolen property could be discovered. A hundred men were suspected and questioned, but not one could be held responsible. It was like the swoop of a hawk, and as full of deadly vengeance.

In 1862, in Richardson's brigade of infantry, a sutler was cleared out at noon, in the midst of four thousand men with their eyes open, and \$1,000 worth of goods secreted in camp so well that only a dozen penholders could be found by the searchers. Twenty men did the business in about two minutes, and not one of them could be identified.—*Detroit Free Press*.

A TERRIBLE POSSIBILITY.

Mr. Park Benjamin, an ex-naval officer and an accomplished scientist, has written a sketch which ought to wake up the American people to a sense of their naval and military weakness. The story purports to be a forecast of what is very likely to take place. For some slight or offense, Spain declares war against the United States, and four Spanish iron-clads are thereupon sent to the port of New York. The Franklin, our very best war-ship, engages the *Salamanca*, but the guns of the Spanish vessel tear the American all to pieces before the shot from our own vessel can reach her armored antagonist. Finally, the invading fleet get into position outside of Coney Island, and deliberately shell New York, in four days making the city a heap of blazing ruins.

The object of Mr. Benjamin is to bring home vividly to the American people that while they have an extensive sea coast and rich and populous cities liable to capture, they have no navy, nor have they any large guns. A very modest naval force would require five years to build and get in readiness. To construct the machinery necessary to make an Armstrong or Krupp gun, would require eighteen months of time. The largest guns we could put in position would be ineffective for a greater distance than three miles; but the Spanish vessel would carry guns which could shell New York at a distance of eleven or twelve miles. Mr. Benjamin's statements are borne out by the official reports of our leading naval and military authorities. But the American people pay no heed. Democracies are proverbially short-sighted, and never realize peril until it comes. Every school-boy knows that potentially we are the greatest naval and military power on earth, but the average American cannot realize that it takes time to create an army and navy, or to construct great guns, and that an unarmed giant is at the mercy of a seven-year-old boy, armed with a pistol. Nothing but some fearful disaster, like the capture of New York by some contemptible naval power, will make our people realize the situation.—*Democrat's*.

IN THE JAWS OF DEATH.

The case of President Garfield recalls the fact that many persons in the world's history have become well after their physicians and friends had given them up. Richard I of England had a fever in Palestine which the physicians said would kill him; but he got back to his own country alive and well. William III of England was always sick, and was three times given up by his doctors, but he finally died from the effects of a fall. His ancestor, William of Orange, who founded the Dutch republic, was shot through the neck and face by an assassin; but recovered to the amazement of every one. Charles O'Connor, the well-known New York lawyer, was pronounced hopelessly sick by his physicians, but he recovered and is now a well man, although he had read his obituaries in all the morning papers. But the most curious case was that of Cardinal Bentivoglio. He was supposed to have died of quinsy, and the physicians that served him had left the room; but the cardinal's pet monkey appeared upon the scene, and taking his master's red hat, put it on his head and began to admire itself in the mirror, chattering and making such absurd grimaces that the moribund cardinal burst into a violent fit of laughter, which broke the quinsy and his life was saved. It now appears that President Garfield never had a chance for his life. He was mortally wounded on that fatal Second of July, and no human skill could do him any good afterwards. It is one of the mysteries of nature why the Omnipotent should permit so much needless suffering.—*From Democrat's Monthly for December*.